



California State Fire Marshal **CODE INTERPRETATION**

Date Issued	January 6, 2006	Interpretation #	05-034
Topic	Dental Offices		
Code Section(s)	2001 California building Code Section 308.1		
Requested by	Jeff Kilpatrick WR&D Architects 2340 Garden Rd. Suite 100 Monterey, Ca. 93940		

1. Is the use of nitrous oxide gas sedation and/or the use of oral sedation pills such as Triasalam considered sedation methods that would render patients “incapable of unassisted self-preservation”?

The American Dental Association clarified that nitrous oxide is used in conjunction with oxygen for anxiety control only, and is not considered conscious sedation. Therefore, the use of nitrous oxide for the purpose of anxiety control would not be considered rendering the patient “incapable of unassisted self-preservation”.

Any other means of sedation including the use of medication in pill form would be considered either conscious sedation or anesthesia, depending on the method utilized and may render the patients “incapable of unassisted self-preservation”.

2. Would the use of the above sedations constitute either a Group I-1.2 Occupancy or a Group B occupancy if the condition occurs within one tenant space and the tenant space contains more than five dental operatory areas which have gas piping delivering nitrous oxide gas to patients.

Facilities using nitrous oxide and oxygen would be classified as Group "B" occupancies.

However, when a permit is issued by the Dental Board of California to administer deep sedation or general anesthesia which renders the patient into an induced state of depressed consciousness accompanied by the partial loss of protective reflexes, including the inability to continually maintain an airway independently and/or respond purposefully to physical stimulation or verbal command for oral surgery and more than five chairs are available, the dental office would then be considered as an I-1.2 occupancy.